Defying Distance (cont.)

“Polycom always wanted to have a presence across the top markets in Asia-Pacific, and naturally Korea was key to this approach,” said Shin. “From a market perspective, Korea was being recognized regionally and globally for many leading brands, and in many core industries, such as technology, automotive, consumer goods and the white goods industry.”

Polycom Korea provides the entire range of Polycom’s services and products, which include video solutions, voice solutions and professional services. One of Polycom’s most impressive video products is called the Immersive Telepresence Solution. A high-quality room video, it allows for the life-size telepresence of people in a different location, which means a team from Korea could sit as if across a table from a team from the United States via video.

A representative product of Polycom’s voice category is the Sound Station, a triangle or starfish-shaped speakerphone. Polycom Korea works with an ecosystem of 38 re-sellers to deliver products and solutions to customers in diverse industries, including POSCO Engineering & Construction Co., Ltd., universities in Korea collaborating with universities abroad to offer classes via video and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) of Korea. NEMA chose Polycom’s video collaboration solutions last year to improve communication and cooperation among emergency response teams in 17 cities and provinces nationwide. The aim was to quickly connect the central disaster and safety countermeasure teams at NEMA headquarters with government agencies and disaster control centers elsewhere.

Polycom Korea has also partnered with customers to pioneer solutions. In 2011, Polycom Korea worked with a leading mobile device company in Korea to develop a Polycom enterprise video application for tablet devices.

“Korea is creating value for the company,” said Shin. “The infrastructure is very developed, so we are ready to use that kind of technology and adopt solutions based on that.”

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Infrastructure such as network and mobile – 3G, 4G and Wi-Fi that enable the fast and smooth delivery of video, audio and content – is crucial to promoting video conferencing, added Shin. Other factors that drew Polycom to invest in Korea were the rapid growth of Korea’s technology sector, high technology adoption rate, ideal market conditions for testing new technologies and a complex environment of high demand and sophisticated standards.

“Korea is the right country to use the video technology and becoming a good example of a kind of, you know, leading-edge technology,” said Shin. This is also the right time for video technology, as services like Skype and Apple’s Face Time have helped users become comfortable with using video in their daily lives. They have eliminated a certain hesitation that may have been present in the past when it came to the medium, drawing everyone from children to seniors, said Shin.

“As for any competition Polycom may face with free video applications, the country manager doesn’t see much room for rivalry between free applications and enterprise-grade solutions that can, among other things, ensure greater security and many other critical features.

“The good thing is, they are helping promote the market with us,” said Shin. Going forward, Polycom Korea plans to focus more on software, from a product perspective. Its products may be hardware, but with developments in mobile applications and cloud computing, Polycom is increasingly becoming a solutions and software company.

“The environment is changing and people demand is changing,” said Shin. “And Korean companies are becoming very competitive not just locally, but pan-regionally and globally, and therefore they need technology solutions to help them achieve this. Human, face-to-face collaboration is very important to people in business, and our Polycom solutions enable them to do just that so that they can defy distance no matter where they are.”

By Young Chang
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- U.S. President Barack Obama has been known to use Polycom’s Sound Station.